

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 OMB-01 EB-07 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

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O R 141740Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7650

INFO DIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR VAININGEN GER

AMECONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

USDOCSOUTH NAPLES ITALY

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARDAW

C O N F I D E N T I E L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 7964

R.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: BERLINGUER CALLS FOR COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO GOVERNMENT AFTER
ELECTIONS

US DOCSOUTH FOR INTAF

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REF: ROME 7886, P R 141200Z MAY 76

SUMMARY: PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER CALLED FOR COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO GOVERNMENT BASED ON "TEMPORARY ALLIANCE" OF ALL PARTIES (EXCEPT FOR RIGHT MSI) FOLLOWING JUNE 20 ELECTIONS. BERLINGUER STATED THAT NEW PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONTRADICT PCI STRATEGY OF HISTORIC COMPROMISE, BUT RATHER IS "IMMEDIATE" EXPEDIENT TO FACE PRESENT CRISIS SITUATION. BERLINGUER WAS PARTICULARLY HARD ON THE DC PARTY. ONLY BY INFLECTING SUBSTANTIAL ELECTORAL LOSSES ON CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND BRINGING PCI INTO THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, WILL DC ARROGANCE OF POWER BE CURBED AND PROGRESSIVE TRENDS WITHIN PARTY ENHANCED. BERLINGUER SET FORTH LIST OF TRADITIONAL, MODERATE SOUNDING PCI OBJECTIVES IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELD AND REITERATED FORMER CLAIMS THAT COMMUNISTS WOULD NOT UNILATERALLY TAKE ITALY OUT OF NATO, BREAK US-ITALIAN TIES OR SEEK TO HAMSTRING EUROPEAN UNITY. HE SAW ENCOURAGING SIGNS OF DIVERSITY OF VIEWS IN US ON COMMUNIST QUESTION WHICH MIGHT PERMIT NORMAL US RELATIONS WITH ITALIAN GOVERNMENT INCLUDING PCI. HE URGED SOCIALISTS TO CLARIFY THEIR POSITION ON POSSIBLE FUTURE DC-PSI ACCORD AND TOOK SLAP AT ULTRA LEFT PARTIES FOR DAMAGING WORKING CLASS UNITY. BERLINGUER SPEECH LIKELY TO REKINDLE POLEMICS ON COMMUNIST QUESTION AND FOCUS DC CAMPAIGN ON THIS ISSUE. EARLIER HINTS FROM PCI SOURCES THAT PCI PROPOSAL WOULD NOT CALL FOR PCI ENTRY INTO GOVERNMENT SUGGEST THAT BERLINGUER SPEECH MAY HAVE BEEN TOUGHENED UP PRIOR TO DELIVERY AT URGING OF HARDER LINE COLLEAGUES. END SUMMARY.

CALL FOR NEW GOVERNMENT INCLUDING THE PCI:

1. IN MAJOR POLICY SPEECH TO PCI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MAY 13, PARTY SECRETARY BERLINGUER CALLED FOR COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT AS ONLY WAS OUT OF PRESENT "INTOLERABLE" SITUATION. PCI LEADER DEFINED HIS PROPOSAL AS REQUIRING THAT "ITALY BE LED BY A WIDE AND UNITARY GOVERNMENT COALITION WHICH EMBRACES ALL THE DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR PARTIES, INCLUDING THE PCI." NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD BE "TEMPORARY ALLIANCE" CONFIDENTIAL

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DESIGNED TO LAST "AT LEAST A FEW YEARS" AND WOULD HAVE TASK OF LIFTING ITALY OUT OF ITS PRESENT CRISIS AND PUTTING IT ON "NEW PATH". ONCE CRISIS HAD BEEN RESOLVED, THE INDIVIDUAL PARTIES COMPOSING THE GOVERNMENT COULD DECIDE THEIR FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION.

2. BERLINGUER EXPLAINED THAT NEW PCI PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONTRADICT "FUNDAMENTAL" COMMUNIST STRATEGY OF

"HISTORIC COMPROMISE," BUT IS RATHER AN "IMMEDIATE" RESPONSE TO URGENT NEEDS OF PRESENT SITUATION. BERLINGUER ADDED THAT IF SOCIALIST OBJECTIVE IS "EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT" INCLUDING PCI, PSI, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND OTHER PARTIES, THEN IT IS NOT "SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT" FROM COMMUNIST PROPOSAL.

3. BERLINGUER'S SPEECH COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES AND CONSTITUTES CORE OF COMMUNIST ELECTORAL PLATFORM. ADDITIONAL MAJOR POINTS FOLLOW.

ANALYSIS OF PRESENT SITUATION:

4. BERLINGUER SAW 1972-76 (SIXTH LEGISLATURE) PERIOD AS CHARACTERIZED BY DEEPENING CRISIS COMBINED WITH GROWING INABILITY OF DC-LED GOVERNMENTS EXCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS TO DEAL WITH SITUATION. BRIGHT SPOTS ON THIS DARKENING BACKGROUND INCLUDE DEFEAT OF "CENTER-RIGHT" GOVERNMENT IN 1973, MAY 1974 DIVORCE REFERENDUM OUTCOME (DC DEFEAT) AND JUNE 15, 1975, PCI ELECTORAL GAINS. DURING THIS PERIOD, FAR-RIGHT MSI HAS BECOME FURTHER ISOLATED, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO SEND THEIR "IRRATIONAL ANTI-COMMUNISM" AND THE DIALOGUE WHICH PCI HAS "FOR SOME TIME" HAD WITH REPUBLICANS HAS OFTEN BEEN PRODUCTIVE. IN ADDITION, SOCIALISTS HAVE ANNOUNCED DEFINITIVE END OF CENTER-LEFT AND UNACCEPTABILITY OF PREJUDICIAL OPPOSITION TO COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO GOVERNMENT.

5. THE DC REPRESENT MORE COMPLEX SITUATION. AFTER ITS DEFEATS IN 1974 AND 1975, SOME (POSITIVE) SIGNS OF CHANGE BECAME EVIDENT WITHIN THE PARTY. HOWEVER, EACH TIME CRUCIAL DECISIONS HAVE BEEN NECESSARY, THE DC HAS REFUSED TO MAKE THE REQUIRED "OPENING." "CONTRADICTIONS CONFIDENTIAL

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AND FERMENT" WITHIN THE DC REMAIN, BUT IN ORDER FOR THEM TO EMERGE, THE DC MUST RECEIVE A NEW AND HEAVIER ELECTORAL DEFEAT. ONLY IN THIS FASHION WILL DC BE PREVENTED FROM CARRYING ON ITS ANTI-COMMUNIST POLICIES AFTER JUNE 20. "ONLY THE PRESENCE OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT" CAN PUT AN END TO DC ARROGANCE.

PCI OBJECTIVES:

6. BERLINGUER DEFINED PCI OBJECTIVES AS A MORE "JUST, FREE AND ORDERED" SOCIETY. GOVERNMENT ACTION IN NEXT FEW YEARS MUST MOVE IN THREE FUNDAMENTAL DIRECTIONS TOWARD: A SOUND ECONOMY, AN EFFICIENT DEMOCRATIC STATE, AND AN ORDERED AND FUNCTIONING SOCIETY. HE THEN PROCEEDED TO TICK OFF LONG SERIES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES SOUGHT BY PCI. LIST CONTAINED NO SURPRISES AND PCI DESIDERATA WERE EXPRESSED IN TERMS GENERAL ENOUGH TO OFFEND ALMOST NO ONE. BERLINGUER MADE OBVIOUS EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN IMAGE OF PCI AS RESPONSIBLE, EFFICIENT PARTY OF ORDER MERITING MIDDLE AS WELL AS WORKING CLASS SUPPORT.

7. PCI SECRETARY ALSO BENT OVER BACKWARDS TO EMPHASIZE PCI AUTONOMY IN RELATIONS WITH OTHER COMMUNIST PARTIES AND MODERATION IN ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD NATO, US-ITALIAN TIES AND EUROPEAN UNITY. PCI "INTERNATIONALISM" HAS NOT IN THE LAST HINDERED PARTY IN DECIDING ITS OWN AUTONOMOUS AND EVEN CRITICAL POSITION WITH RESPECT TO BEHAVIOR OF OTHER COMMUNIST PARTIES OR SOCIALIST STATES. NOR ARE PCI "FRIENDLY RELATION" WITH OTHER CPS AND LIBERATION MOVEMENT "REGULATED BY ANY ORGANIZATIONAL LINK." PCI FOLLOWS ITS OWN MODEL OF SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION SAFEGUARDING AND EXTENDING INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE LIBERTIES.

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8. BERLINGUER REITERATED PCI POSITION THAT PARTY DIES NOT AIM AT "UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL OF ITALY FROM NATO, DISTURBANCE OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN ITALY AND THE USA" OR "COMPROMISE" OF ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN EUROPEAN UNIFICATION "ON DEMOCRATIC BASIS."

9. CRITICIZING WARNINGS BY US LEADERS AGAINST PCI
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PARTICIPATION IN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, BERLINGUER CALLED ON ALL "ITALIAN PATRIOTS" TO REJECT ANY ATTACK ON ITALIAN INDEPENDENCE. HOWEVER, HE FOUND "INTERESTING" THE ABSENCE OF UNITY OF VIEWS ON THIS QUESTION IN US LEADING CIRCLES. WHILE SOME TAKE HARD ANTI-COMMUNIST STAND, OTHERS IN UNIVERSITY, CULTURAL AND MEDIA FIELDS AS WELL AS SOME POLITICAL "LEADERS" VIEW WITH FAVOR, INTEREST OR AT LEAST TRANQUILITY THE PROSPECT OF "NORMAL AND POSITIVE" US RELATIONS WITH AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS.

A "QUESTION" FOR THE SOCIALISTS, A SLAP FOR THE ULTRAS:

10. AFTER POINTING OUT SIMILARITIES BETWEEN COMMUNIST PROPOSAL FOR "TEMPORARY ALLIANCE" OF PARTIES OF "CONSTITUTIONAL ARC" (ALL BUT MSI) AND SOCIALIST PROPOSAL FOR "EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT," BERLINGUER CHIDED PSI FOR AMBIGUITY. SINGLING OUT PHRASE IN MAY 9 SPEECH BY DEMARTINO IN WHICH PSI SECRETARY CALLED FOR MORE VOTES FOR SOCIALISTS TO FACE "WHATEVER EVENTUALITY" JUNE 20 VOTE PUTS BEFORE HIS PARTY, BERLINGUER ASKED WHETHER PSI MIGHT EVEN BE CONSIDERING RESURRECTING CENTER-LEFT IN SOME FASHION. BERLINGUER EXPLICITLY EXCLUDED ANY PCI BENEVOLENCE TOWARD ANY ATTEMPT BY THE DC AND PSI TO FORM A DC-PSI GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: BERLINGUER THUS SOUGHT TO FORCE PSI CLARIFICATION FORECLOSING POSSIBILITY OF NEW DC-PSI ACCORD NOT INCLUDING PCI AS EQUAL PARTNER. PSI DAILY ANANTI THIS MORNING GAVE WAFFLED REPLY DENYING PSI

WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ANY "MODERATE" POLITICAL SOLUTIONS BUT NOT ANSWERING BERLINGUER'S QUESTION.)

11. COMMUNIST LEADER WAS VERY TOUGH ON ULTRA LEFTIST GROUPS WHO HAVE RECENTLY DECIDED TO PRESENT JOINT ELECTORAL LISTS (ROME 7770). HE DENOUNCED THEIR "ADVENTURIST" POLICIES AND PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS WHICH SEEK TO BREAK WORKING CLASS UNITY. HE URGED CONCENTRATION OF LEFTIST VOTES ON PCI. BERLINGUER THEN EXHORTED PARTY ACTIVISTS AND SYMPATHIZERS TO USE REMAINING FIVE WEEKS BEFORE ELECTIONS TO CONDUCT VAST GRASS ROOTS CAMPAIGN TO WIN NEW VOTES.
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COMMENT:

12. BERLINGUER PROPOSAL FOR A "TEMPORARY" COALITION GOVERNMENT INCLUDING THE PCI WILL BE THE MAJOR THEME OF THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. PCI DEMAND IS LIKELY TO REKINDLE POLEMICS ON "COMMUNIST QUESTION" DRIVEN FROM FRONT PAGES BY FRIULI EARTHQUAKE. IN THIS SENSE IT PLAYS INTO HANDS OF THOSE IN DC URGING A VIGOROUS ANTI-COMMUNIST ELECTORAL PITCH AS THE BEST WAY TO HOLD ITS TRADITIONAL ELECTORATE AND ATTRACT VOTERS WHO MAY PREFER SMALLER LAY PARTIES BUT SEE DC AS MAIN ANTI-COMMUNIST BULWARK. BERLINGUER ATTEMPTED TO DISTINGUISH HIS PROPOSAL FROM THE "HISTORIC COMPROMISE," BUT ARGUED THAT IT IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH IT. HE IS RIGHT. HIS PRESENT PROPOSAL FORMALLY DIFFERS FROM THE "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" IN THAT IT IS JUSTIFIED BY "EMERGENCY" RATHER THAN "HISTORIC" FACTORS, THAT IT SUGGESTS INCLUSION OF ALL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES, AND THAT IT IS THEORETICALLY LIMITED IN TIME. THUS, WE SEE LITTLE DIFFERENCE IN SUBSTANCE, ONLY ONE OF LABELS AND TIMING.

13. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT PROPOSAL MAY HAVE BEEN ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED BY BERLINGUER IN MORE MUTED FORM THAN FINAL, MAY 13 VERSION. PCI OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF MAY 11 THAT BERLINGUER PLANNING TO DE-EMPHASIZE "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" BY ADVOCATING TEMPORARY, EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT BASED ON PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD AMONG "CONSTITUTIONAL ARC" PARTIES, BUT NOT RPT NOT INCLUDING PCI IN THE PCI IN THE GOVERNMENT. IF THIS WAS REALLY BERLINGUER'S INTENTION, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT HARDER LINE COLLEAGUES IN PCI SECRETARIAT MAY HAVE FORCED AMENDMENT OF HIS DRAFT SPEECH BETWEEN MAY 11 AND 13.

14. COPY OF BERLINGUER SPEECH POUCHED TO DESK MAY 14.

15. DEBATE IN PCI CC ON BERLINGUER SPEECH CONTINUES TODAY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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